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DE RUEHWR #0431/01 1140938
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 240938Z APR 09
FM AMEMBASSY WARSAW
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8219
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 WARSAW 000431

SIPDIS

EUR/CE, EUR/ERA, EUR/UMB, NEA, EAP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/23/2019

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PL](#)

SUBJECT: POLISH VIEWS ON APRIL EU FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING
(GAERC)

REF: 04/17/2009 GIAUQUE E-MAIL

Classified By: Political Counselor Dan Sainz for reasons
1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) SUMMARY. The Polish MFA's EU Correspondent defended the Czech Presidency's decision to invite Belarusian President Lukashenka to the May 7 Eastern Partnership, and predicted that Lukashenka would indeed attend. Poland will use the release of the Commission's report on the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) to press for increased resources for Europe's eastern neighbors. FM Sikorski and his German counterpart are considering a joint visit to Kyiv to push for political consensus in the face of Ukraine's deepening economic crisis. Poland would welcome greater coordination with the U.S. on Ukraine. On Moldova, Poland wants the EU to call for compromise between the government and opposition and to send a strong signal that human rights violations will not be tolerated. The EU-3 have been noticeably less active in lobbying other member states for additional sanctions on Iran. Poland will continue to "push for balance" in the Middle East by urging the EU to "upgrade" relations with Israel and to take a wait-and-see approach on the new Israeli Government's policies. Poland is interested in working with the U.S. to convince EU member states of the need for a coordinated EU-U.S. effort in Afghanistan. On Burma, no change in the EU's position is expected. END SUMMARY.

EASTERN NEIGHBORHOOD

12. (C) MFA European Correspondent Cyryl Kozaczewski defended the Czech Presidency's decision to invite Lukashenka to the May 7 Eastern Partnership summit, after EU member states failed to reach consensus on the issue at the March 30 Gymnich meeting. Kozaczewski argued that the "lowest common denominator" was consensus that invitees should be at the same protocol level. Kozaczewski predicted that Lukashenka would end up attending the summit, despite the Czechs' best efforts to encourage him to send a lower level representative.

13. (C) Poland will use the release of the Commission's report on the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) to press for a "re-balancing" of resources in light of the impact of the economic crisis in Eastern Europe and developments in the region since August 2008. Under the terms of a 2006 agreement, 2/3 of the ENP's budget goes to southern neighbors, and 1/3 to eastern neighbors. Poland believes the EU should devote more ENP resources -- beyond the Eastern Partnership -- to helping eastern neighbors weather the economic crisis.

UKRAINE

14. (C) Kozaczewski said Ukraine remains a matter of serious concern for Poland and Germany. FM Sikorski and German FM Steinmeier have discussed the situation frequently in recent weeks and are considering making a joint (post-GAERC) visit to Kyiv to encourage political consensus in the face of

Ukraine's deepening economic crisis. Kozaczewski welcomed the news that the Deputy Secretary was traveling to Ukraine and suggested greater U.S.-German-Polish coordination would be helpful. He said Sikorski and Steinmeier both see the need for more EU discussion on Ukraine and are working to "gather support" among other member states.

MOLDOVA

15. (C) Kozaczewski said Poland has pushed for Moldova to be on the GAERC agenda. Poland wants the EU to send a strong signal to Chisinau that human rights violations will not be tolerated and to call for compromise between the government and the opposition. He noted that Czech PM Topolaneck and HighRep Solana are traveling to Chisinau April 24. Poland hopes political developments in Moldova will not negatively impact the Eastern Partnership summit. Kozaczewski said Poland wanted the Partnership to focus exclusively on civil society and development projects below the political level, and not become a "political instrument."

IRAN

16. (C) Kozaczewski said it was not clear whether Iran would be handled as a separate topic, or as part of the discussion on the Middle East. Asked about prospects for additional EU sanctions on Iran, Kozaczewski said, "paradoxically, we were closer before the new U.S. Administration took office." There has been no change of heart among the traditional hold-out member states, who see other issues as "more urgent," despite the fact that Iran is getting closer to developing a nuclear weapon. Kozaczewski said the EU-3,

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especially the French, have been noticeably less active in lobbying other member states than in the past. He suggested any GAERC discussion on Iran would be more productive if it were "prepared" in advance, perhaps by EU political directors.

MIDDLE EAST

17. (C) Kozaczewski said the Middle East is a "standing topic" at the GAERC, but ministers do not plan to issue Conclusions. There is growing concern about limited humanitarian access to Gaza and ongoing construction of settlements in the West Bank. He said Poland would continue to "push for balance" by urging the EU to "upgrade" relations with Israel and to take a wait-and-see approach on the new Israeli Government.

TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS

18. (C) Kozaczewski offered a positive assessment of the April 4-5 EU-U.S. Summit in Prague. Poland "took note" of President Obama's remarks concerning U.S. leadership on climate change and welcomed his expressions of support for the Eastern Partnership and the Southern Energy Corridor. Poland is interested in working with the U.S. to convince EU member states of the need for a coordinated EU-U.S. effort in Afghanistan.

BURMA

19. (C) Kozaczewski expected the EU would continue sanctions against Burma, but said Poland supports the idea of increased humanitarian assistance and a renewed push for democratization. He predicted discussion would be limited, noting that the text of Conclusions on Burma is all but final.

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